

News from Ed Markey

United States Congress

Massachusetts Seventh District

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ONE OF THESE PROVISIONS IS NOT LIKE THE OTHERS, ONE OF THESE PROVISIONS DOESN'T BELONG

House Republicans Sneak Un-approved Drilling into War Funding Bills

Washington, D.C. –Representative Markey (D-MA), a senior Democrat on the House Energy and Commerce and Resources committees made the following statement about the backdoor budget deals to insert the drilling provision.

“When we went to war with Iraq, President Bush said “oil has nothing to do with the war in Iraq.” But apparently the Republican leadership did not get the President’s message, because here they are tonight tying the war in Iraq together with oil in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

“Unfortunately, the oil in question tonight – oil that may or may not actually be in the Arctic Refuge -- won’t be available to support anyone for another 10 years.

“The Republicans have also explicitly tied the revenue from lease sales in the Arctic Refuge to relief for hurricane victims. If you thought the response to Katrina was late and unacceptable, the revenue from lease sales in the Arctic Refuge is, at best, 3-5 years away, even though the victims of Katrina and Rita need the money NOW.

“Based on this cockeyed combination of policies, are we to conclude that the Republicans intend to keep the troops in Iraq for more than 10 years and don’t intend to help the victims of Katrina and Rita for at least 3 years???

“The reality is that drilling in the Arctic Refuge has no link to this important bill to fund our troops –it simply doesn’t belong. The reality is that this is nothing more than the latest attempt by the Republican leadership to attach drilling in the Arctic Refuge to a legislative vehicle it has nothing to do with in the hopes that it will be dragged through Congress.

“But drilling in the Arctic Refuge is an idea so bad that every legislative vehicle the Republican leadership attaches it to stalls. The Republicans tried to put Arctic drilling onto the Energy bill, but failed. They tried to put it onto the Budget Reconciliation Bill, but failed. And now they’re trying to put it onto the Defense bill, even though neither the House- nor the Senate-passed defense bills had any Arctic drilling provision in it, even though this is completely beyond the scope of the conference, even though it is not germane. The Republican leadership is ready to bend and contort the rules of the House in order to force their unpopular agenda and delusional mission to drill in the pristine Arctic.

“It is irresponsible and reprehensible to bog down this *must-pass* DoD Appropriations bill with this *can’t-pass* Arctic Refuge drilling language and I urge this body to vote down this rule, so we can bring back and pass a clean Defense Appropriations Bill.”

For more information on how Representative Markey’s work to protect the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge check out: <http://www.house.gov/markey/>.